





Chapter Two of Tough

Written by Alex Woolfson
Pencils by Vitto
Colors by Winona Nelson

Cover Painting by Winona Nelson

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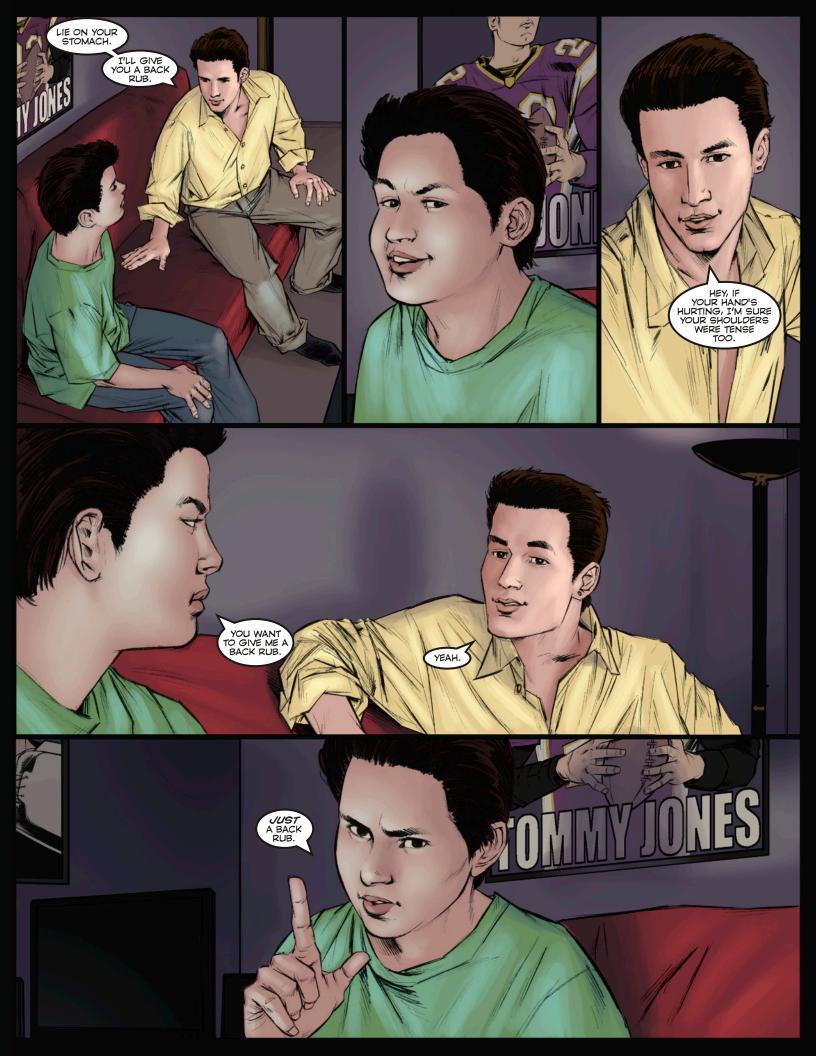












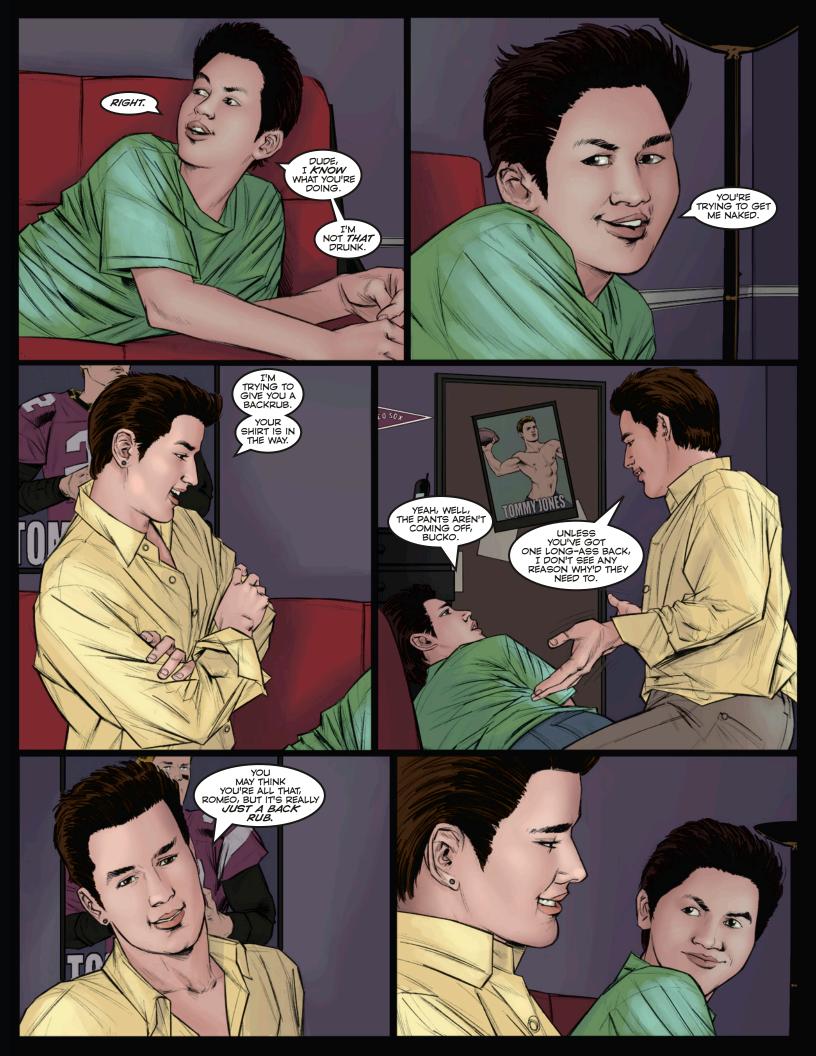








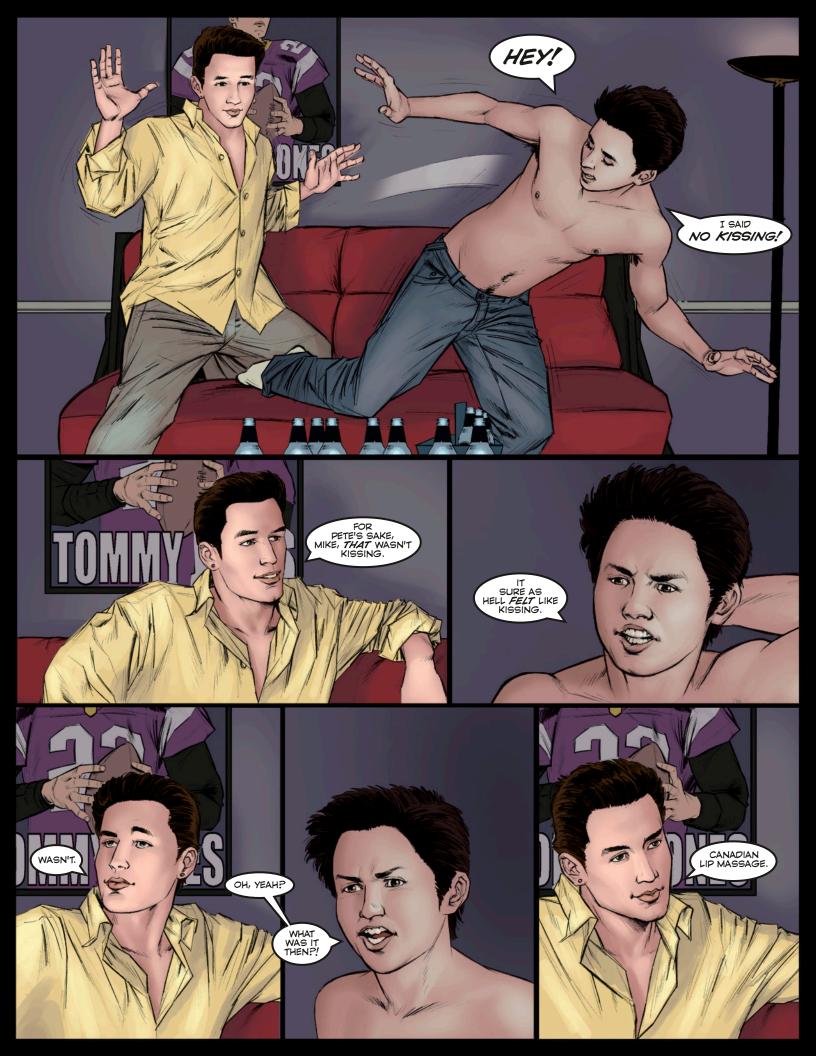








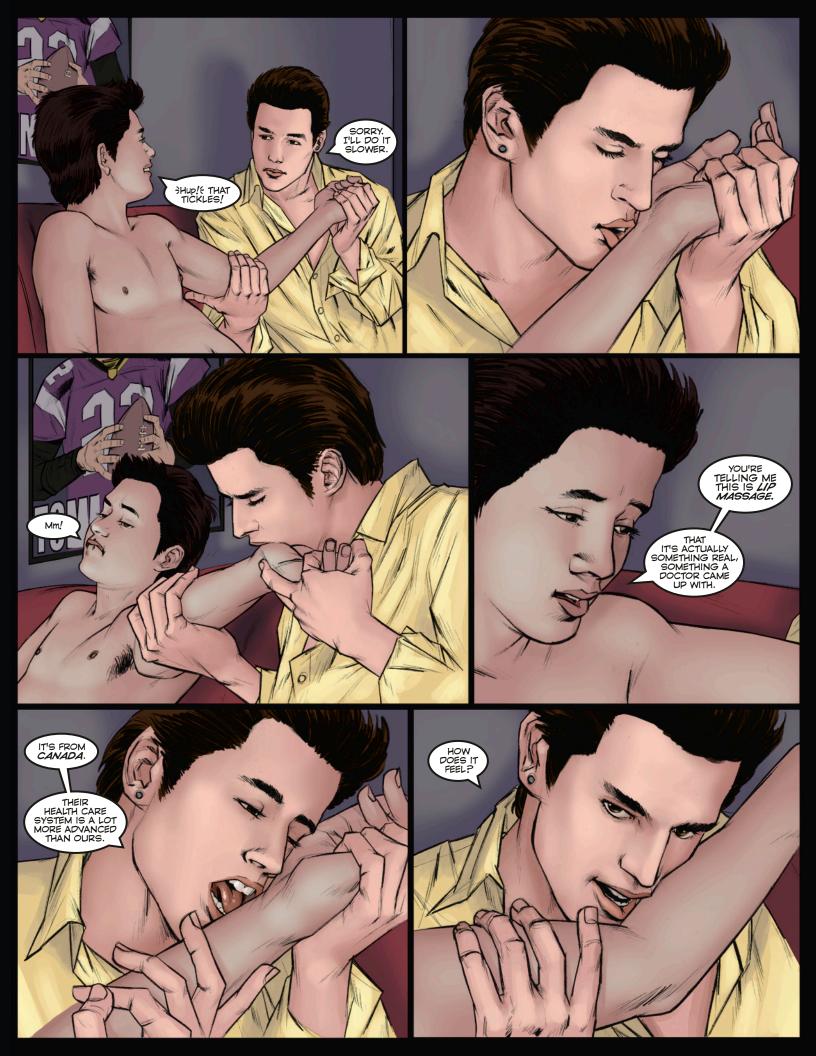




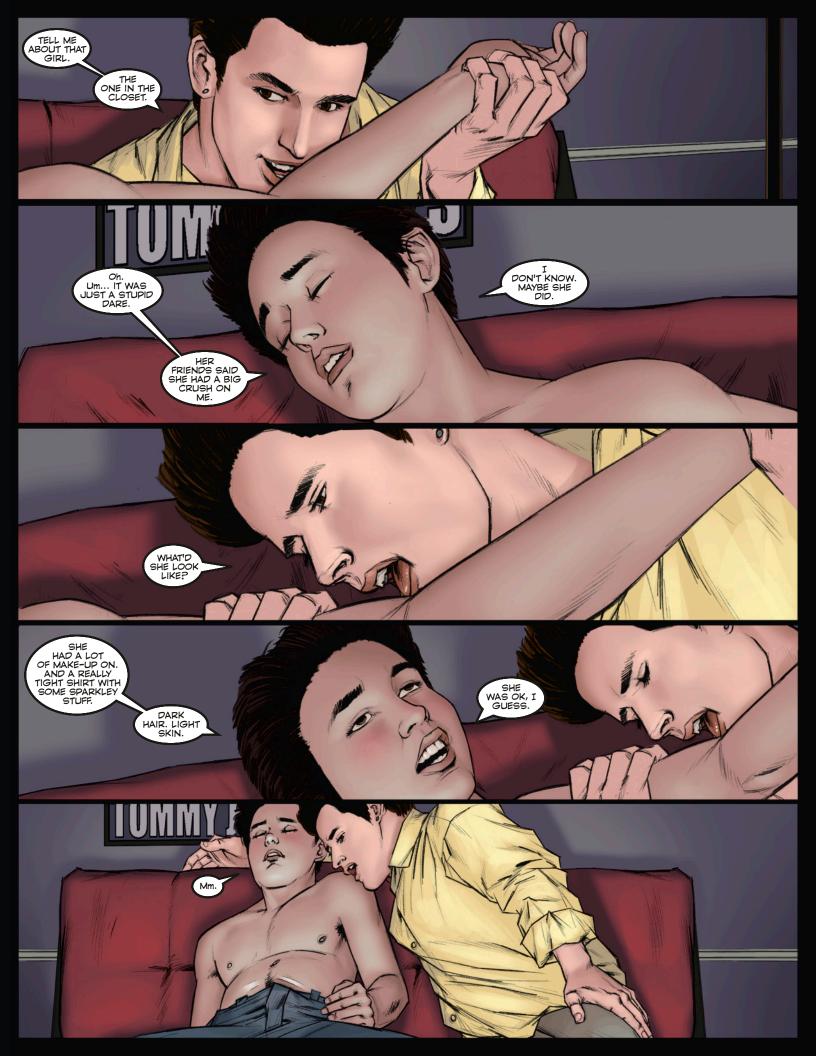














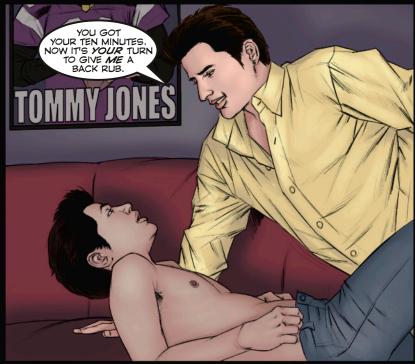




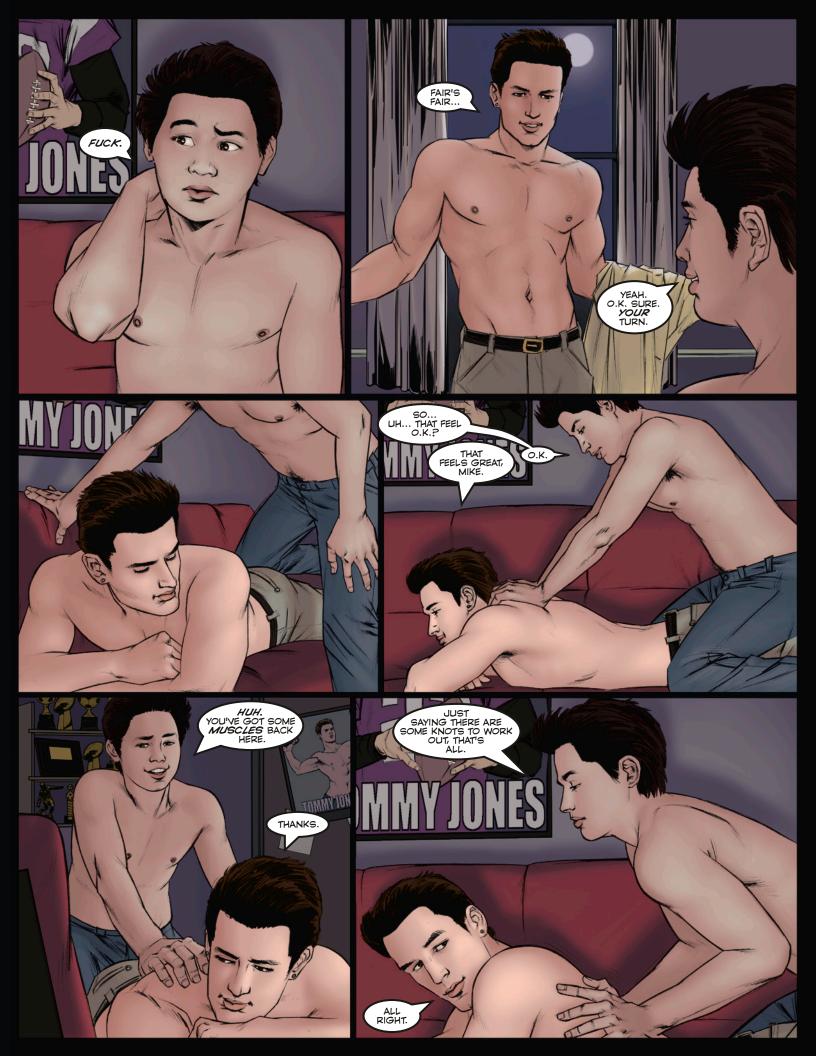


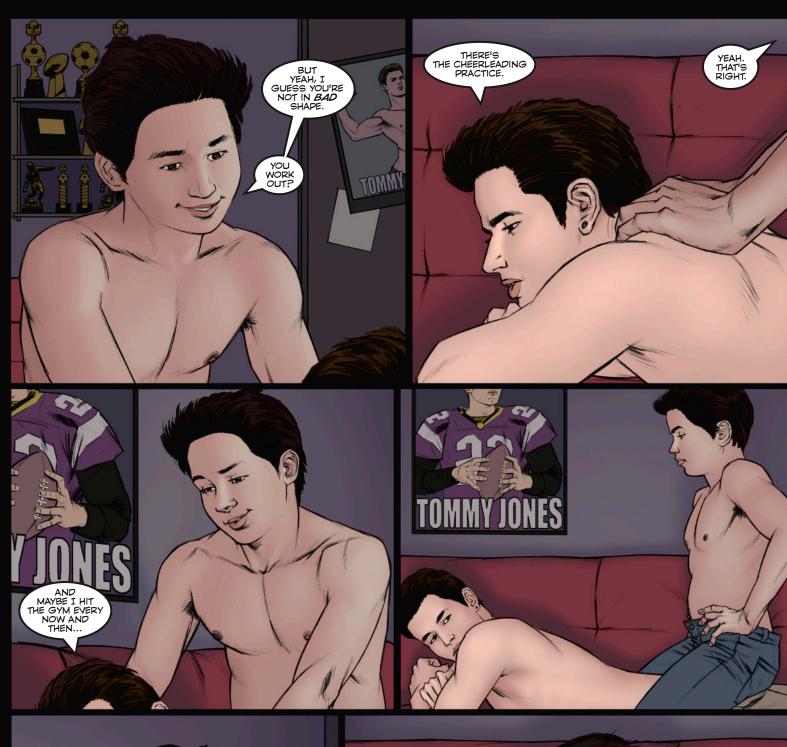








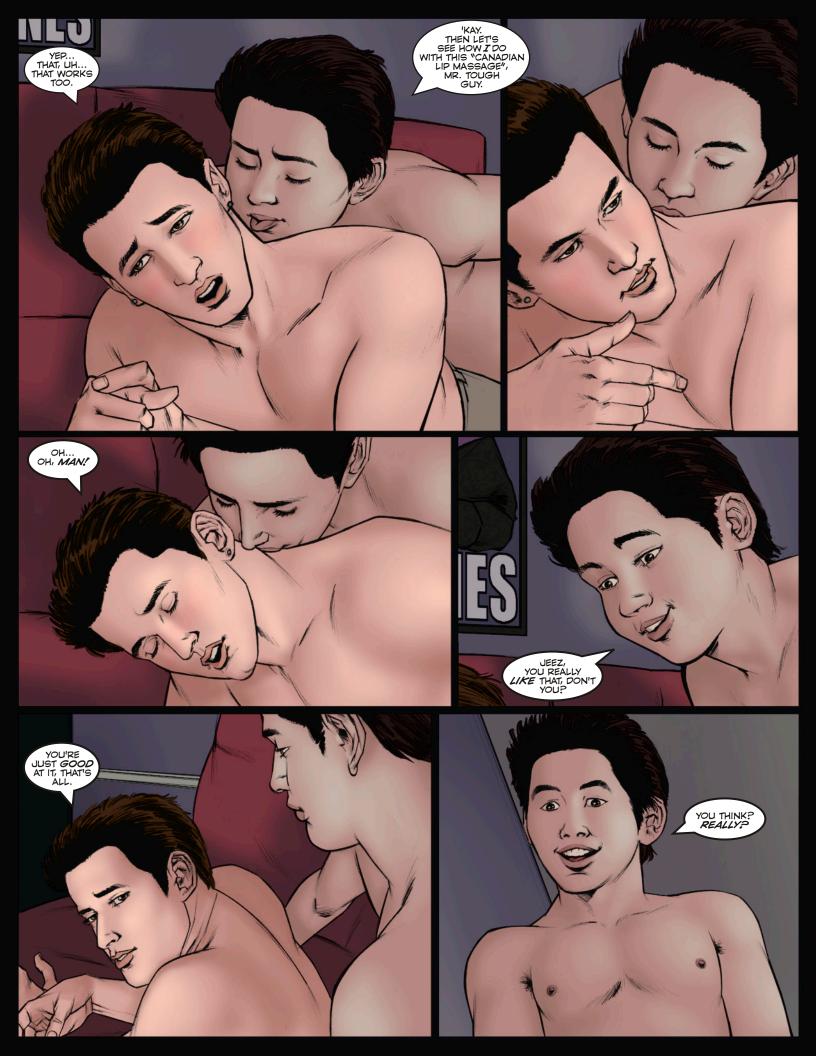






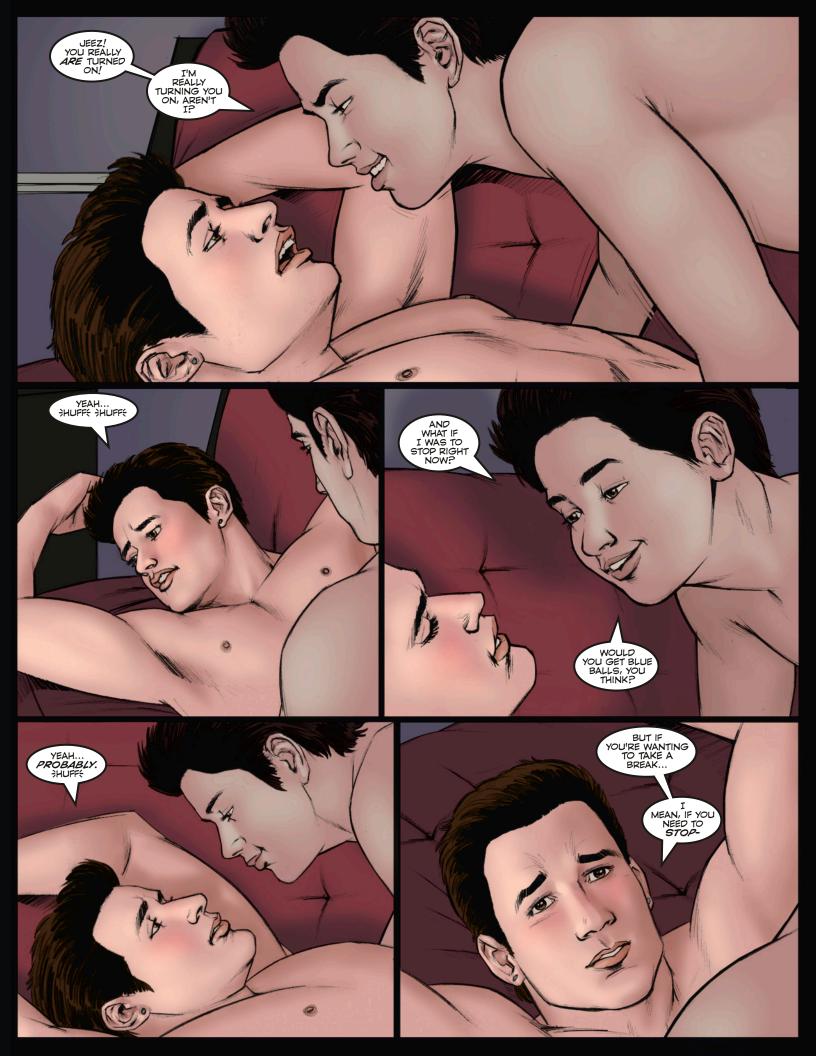


















AUTHOR NOTES

Boy, this was fun to write! And so fun to get the art for! My favorite panels are Page 9, Panels 2 & 4; Page 23, Panel 6; Page 27, Panel 1; pretty much all the panels from Pages 31 through the end but above all Page 29, Panel 1 (where Mike is rubbing his neck and swearing—just the *perfect* expression and so adorable!) And Winona's cover—wow. Just wow.:-) Not to mention how beautifully her coloring has rendered the anatomy of each character—such awesome muscles!— and how her shading creates the perfect mood. Yet again I am so humbled and grateful for the talent that I've been able to attract to this work. And I have more to be thankful for than just having my scripts translated into jaw-dropping art.

While I definitely feel a huge personal investment in the Yaoi 911 project—I come up with the stories, write the scripts, give direction on the art—creating comics is a true collaboration. My scripts inspire (hopefully!) my artists' imagination and then their work affects how I choose to tell what happens. The results are symbiotic and often magical—certainly more compelling than any of us could come up with on our own.

What made me think about this truism as I pen these end notes? Lettering the sex noises, of course! As the scriptwriter, it makes sense that I'm the one who creates all the word balloons and sound effects—that way I can see immediately if my dialogue is working with the facial expressions and action in the panels and make any last minute changes. Now, ask any writer of erotic fiction and you will hear horror stories about how difficult it is to write the dialogue of sex. Almost every onomatopoetic grunt you can imagine looks pretty goofy on the page, but dead silence is fairly creepy too, so you've got to come up with *something*. In the original script for this, I had all kinds of sound effects and noises being made as Mike and Rob made out. Thus, it was with great relief that as I added these verbal exclamations to the pages, I realized how few of them were actually required. The gorgeous art itself gives all the music you would ever need, which meant I could save my "Mm!"s and "Oh!"s and "SUCK"s for the biggest moments and keep the goofiness down to a minimum. Thanks Vitto and Winona—total lifesavers!

Now, that's obviously a pretty silly example of how I as a writer am influenced by my artists' work. A more interesting one has to do with the character of Rob. I'd originally envisioned him as a high school senior who had just turned 18. That's certainly older than 15 year old Mike but it's not such an unusual age-difference in the teen dating world. The way Vitto has drawn him, though, he doesn't look 18 to me—he looks at least 20 and, more probably, in his *early* 20s. And if it's a 22 or 23 year old hitting on a 15 year old boy, then that's a whole different love

story altogether. If you're writing honestly, it brings up interesting and sticky questions about motivation, consent and power. *Tough* is Mike's story, so in "No Kissing" we're sharing his first time experience kissing another guy just as he does—as something that's scary, daring, funny, erotic and ultimately empowering. But as for what comes next: well, if you've ever known a teen who's dated someone significantly older, you know it can get... complicated.

Of course, I could ignore what I'm seeing in the art and stick with my original story. After all, while Vitto was providing me the pages for both Chapters 1 and 2, I was able to convince myself that Rob *could* be 18. Perhaps I could convince you too, chalk it up to artistic license. But that would be missing a terrific opportunity: the ability to explore the theme of sex and power. Not to mention the fact it would be a form of lying—and as a writer, you only want to lie to tell a deeper truth. I could run from the creative choice my collaborator has made or I can choose to be inspired by it. Which do you think is going to lead to the stronger, more meaningful story?

I think I need to say Rob's in his early twenties and explore the consequences of that.

So, what's next for our hero Mike?

Cool things, scary things, fun things! In Chapter 3, "Brother's Keeper", we get to meet Maria, Mike's fierce and protective older sister. Mike comes home with a whole lotta hickeys but doesn't want to talk about where they came from. The problem is, Maria's not the kind of gal to take "no" for an answer and she's willing to do whatever it takes to find out what he's been up to. Trust me, Kevin and the bad boys are pussy cats compared to her! And in Chapter 4, "What Are Friends For?", we go back to our yaoi roots by introducing a rival: Justin, a boy from Mike's past. In that comic, there's a hot brother, a sleepover and some shocking confessions on both sides. Yaoi 911 News & Downloads subscribers won't want to miss it!

Want more? Support us!

Things are really cooking for Yaoi 911. We've put out two full color, 35-page chapters in four months. We have another on the way. And it looks like our first for-pay, complete graphic novel, the 90-page sci-fi romance *Artifice*, is on track to be done by the Fall. If you like the kind of work we're creating, then please support us by letting others know about our comics and by purchasing some of our merchandise. Even just a couple dollars makes a huge difference—and you get cool things sent to you!

I'm offering PDFs of my comic scripts at The Yaoi 911 Store for \$1.99 each. You can get a high-end print of Winona's beautiful cover art for as little as \$19.98 (tack one over your bed for maximum inspiration.) Greeting cards are just \$4.99 and look great on your refrigerator or desk. Finally, you can get official Yaoi 911 T-shirts, magnets and even postage stamps (Hi, Grandma!) over at our Zazzle store. (Wear our T-shirts and soon everyone will be looking for your help with "all their Yaoi emergencies"!)

And hey, if you have a blog or Facebook or Twitter account, please let everyone know about our work and send them to our Free Comics page! That's a great way to help us too!

Thank you very much for reading!

I hope you enjoyed the second chapter of *Tough*. Sure, I like exploring big themes like heroism, sacrifice and power, but at the end of the day, we're here to show you a good time. If our work has made you smile even once, then it's all worth it. Please let me know what you thought! *Nothing* matters more than hearing back from our readers.

And if you did like this comic, let me tell you, the best is yet to come! Two more new stories, lots of action, lots of kissing, lots of good, sexy fun—all in the next 12 months. I'm really proud of the comics we're finishing now. I think you're going to love what we send you next!

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